



USAID | BENIN

FROM THE AMERICAN PEOPLE

TO: All qualified Applicants

FROM: Clemencia Acacha, Supervisory Executive Specialist

Subject: Job Opportunity Announcement

USAID is accepting applications for the following local-hire position:

POSITION TITLE	:	Acquisition and Assistance Specialist
NUMBER OF POSITIONS	:	One (1)
GRADE	:	FSN 10 (Cooperating Country National)
OPENING DATE	:	March 20, 2008
CLOSING DATE	:	April 17, 2008
WORK HOURS	:	Full-time; 40 hours/week

USAID/Benin is an equal opportunity organization. We encourage full participation of all qualified and interested person. Persons with disabilities will be assisted and receive reasonable accommodation.

I. BASIC FUNCTION OF POSITION

The position is located in the Office of Acquisition and Assistance (OAA) located in the USAID/Benin Mission. OAA provides support to the USAID/Benin Mission which includes activities in basic education, family health and promotion of women's justice and empowerment as well as the Executive Office. USAID's annual budget for FY 2008 is approximately \$31 million.

This is one of two identical FSN Acquisition and Assistance (A&A) Specialist positions located in the Office of Acquisition and Assistance (OAA), USAID/Benin.

The primary purpose of this position is to provide subject matter expert advice and services as an A&A Specialist to USAID/Benin in designing, planning, negotiating, executing and administering a full range of acquisition and assistance instruments. The A&A Specialist will provide support to Mission Strategic Objective Teams (SOTs), as well as to the Program and Administrative Management Offices, to ensure implementation leading to the most efficient and effective achievement of results in support of the Mission's Strategic Objectives. The incumbent reports directly to the OAA Senior Acquisition and Assistance Specialist.

The incumbent is responsible for the procurement of a variety of goods and services ranging in complexity from small dollar services and commercial item purchases to multimillion dollar technical assistance acquisition and assistance instruments.

II. MAJOR DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

a. Pre-award/Award Formation: 35% OF TIME

Under the direct supervision of the Senior Acquisition and Assistance Specialist, manages the acquisition and assistance process, ensuring compliance with USG and USAID regulations and policies. Participates in meetings and assists in strategic and procurement planning and provides guidance and instructions on Federal and USAID regulations, policies and procedures to mission personnel and recommends procurement and financing alternatives vis-à-vis appropriate instrument/contract type to achieve SO Team goals.

Provides guidance and support throughout the procurement planning in finalizing SOT and Administrative Management Office procurement plans. Provides comments and recommendations to ensure completeness and appropriateness of statements of work/program descriptions/technical specifications, justifications, source selection criteria, other necessary approvals, etc. before providing clearance to procurement request documents, such as the Modified Acquisition and Assistance Request Documents (MAARD).

Prepares simple and complex solicitation documentation, such as Requests for Proposals (RFP) and Requests for Applications (RFA), as appropriate, and ensures compliance with Federal publication requirements. Coordinates with the requesting office and supervises the development and execution of contractual documentation for the solicitation and technical evaluation phases.

Conducts in-depth cost analysis of business proposals, including such aspects as evaluating technical approaches vis-à-vis proposed cost, reviewing audit reports, forecasting pricing trends, evaluating economic factors, applying weighted guidelines for determining profit/fee and evaluating overhead and general and administrative expenses. Determines the competitive range and develops the USG negotiation strategy.

Conducts negotiations with U.S. and local private sector, including for-profit and not-for-profit organizations, colleges, universities, other USG agencies and Public International Organizations to reach mutual agreement on the terms and conditions of acquisition and assistance instruments. Performs pre-award survey assessments of local NGOs and host government institutions and coordinates with the Office of Financial Management throughout the pre-award survey process. Recommends to the Sr. A&A and the Contracting Officer responsibility determinations.

Recommends awards valued at millions of dollars, and prepares the contractual documentation for signature of the Contracting Officer. Prepares the memoranda of negotiation. Organizes pre-and post-award debriefings. Documents the debriefings. Performs other related duties.

b. Post-award Administration: 35% OF TIME

Under the supervision of the Senior Acquisition and Assistance Specialist, administers A&A instruments in accordance with government regulations and Agency policies. Provides technical and sound advice to Cognizant Technical Officers (CTOs) regarding oversight of contract management/assistance administration within the award terms and conditions and the parameters of the Contracting Officer's delegation of authority to the CTO. Provides interpretation on contract clauses or standard provisions, procurement policies and provides guidance on waivers to CTO personnel as well as to implementing partners.

Assists the Sr. A&A Specialist in conducting post-award orientations to clarify issues on award requirements such as billing procedures, delivery schedules, terms and conditions, reporting requirements. Reviews and makes determination recommendations to the Sr. A&A Specialist and the Contracting Officer regarding consent to subcontract and approval of key administrative actions.

Works closely with the Sr. A&A to coordinate with the Office of Finance Management, the RIG and the Regional Legal Advisor to resolve issues associated with claimed costs, audit findings, fraud, disallowance of costs, organizational conflict of interest, contractor or recipient personnel issues, home or field office questions, etc. and recommends corrective action to be taken to remedy the situation or contract termination, when warranted.

Monitors contractor performance through review of progress reports, vouchers, telephone conversations, correspondence, site visits, etc. for compliance with award terms and conditions. Provides guidance and training as required to host country personnel, contractor personnel and USAID personnel regarding A&A requirements and regulations. Negotiates extensions, price adjustments and modifications to contracts. Prepares determinations and findings relative to negotiated actions and coordinates contractor's requests for deviations.

Maintains contract files and records, prepares reports, as required. Manages the Contractor performance evaluation process to ensure compliance with the FAR. Analyzes questioned costs to determine allow ability. Provides follow-up on audit recommendations, including researching the finding and recommending corrective action for audit closure.

Reviews completed official award file to determine that all contractual actions are satisfied and that there are no pending administrative actions to be resolved, that all file documents are signed, that there are no litigation actions pending and that the award is complete in every respect and ready to be administratively closed.

c. Coordination: 15% OF TIME

Coordinates contracting activities with other host government agencies, USG agencies, and public international organizations. Advises contractors, recipients, SO Team members and host country officials on Federal regulations and Agency policies and procedures. Requests audit reports of pre-award surveys from the Office of the Inspector General, the Defense Contract Audit Agency or M/OAA/CAM. Obtains clearances from the Small Business Administration for requirements set-aside for small, minority and disadvantaged businesses.

Provides advice and assistance to SO Teams on the adequacy of host country contracting process/documentation. Performs cost analysis and negotiation of host country bids/proposals. Reviews implementation letters to the Host Government. Represents the A&A viewpoint by providing value-added input throughout the acquisition and assistance process.

d. Mission support: 15% OF TIME

Keeps updated and informed on all new policies, U.S. legislation, Executive Orders, Federal Regulations and how these may affect USAID A&A instruments. Keeps SOT and administrative support team members informed on new A&A policies through meeting participation. Provides the A&A perspective in assisting team members to arrive at sound business decisions. Recommends innovative ideas or solutions to situations/problems encountered on a daily basis. Ensures that acquisition and assistance support is provided within the established lead times and complies with the statutory and procedural requirements established by Federal and USAID authorities in order to protect USG interests. Provides A&A support to other FSN A&A Specialists and Mission teams during peak workload and vacation periods.

III. OTHER SIGNIFICANT FACTS

a. Supervision Received:

Under the direct supervision of the Senior Acquisition and Assistance Specialist, normally carries out all duties with a high level of independence and within overall policy guidance set by the Mission and the Contracting Officer subject to Senior Acquisition and Assistance Specialist review.

b. Supervision Exercised: None.

c. Available Guidelines:

Federal Acquisition Regulation (FAR), USAID Automated Directive Systems (ADS), Foreign Assistance Manual, Contract Information Bulletin (CIBs)/Acquisition & Assistance Policy Directives (AAPDs), Office of Management Budget (OMB) Circulars and USAID Acquisition Regulation (AIDAR) Handbooks, Mission Orders and Mission Policies, Office of Management and Budget (OMB) Circulars on audit and cost principles for educational and non-profit organizations, 22CFR226, 22CFR228, USAID Policies and Procedures, Foreign Assistance Act, , executive orders and Controller General decisions, and other procurement reference document.

d. Exercise of Judgment:

The employee must at all times demonstrate sound, professional judgment and must be able to recommend appropriate actions to the SR. A&A Specialist and Contracting Officer based on the reasonableness of the business decision, compliance with applicable rules and regulations and other factors identified in the solicitation documentation. He/she is expected to exercise initiative and independent judgment in prioritizing workload, handling contractor proprietary information, and in taking action on contract administration issues, including identifying and researching A&A issues, recommending resolution to A&A issues and preparing draft responses.

e. Authority to Make Commitments:

USAID regulations preclude the issuance of warrants to FSNs. Short of signature authority, the incumbent has considerable authority to negotiate and reach agreement on terms and conditions of any A&A instrument. This includes selection of appropriate instrument type, acceptance of proposed indirect cost rates and proposed fee, recognition of pre-contract costs, agreement on final cost or price, payment provisions, frequency of reporting requirements, etc. These are subject to the review of Senior Acquisition Specialist and final approval of the Contracting Officer.

f. Nature, Level, and Purpose of Contacts:

Direct contract with all Mission officials including office directors and the front office. Externally, contact with mid level representatives of US and local businesses, host country counterparts, non-governmental organizations, Public International Organizations and other USG agencies in the negotiation and administration of A&A instruments.

g. Time Expected to Reach Full Performance Level: Three years

IV. QUALIFICATIONS AND EVALUATION FACTORS

a. Education

Possession of a bachelor's degree in a relevant field; i.e., business administration, finance, marketing, law, etc. In the absence of a bachelor's degree, three years of progressively responsible, job-related professional level experience may be substituted. Specialized training in USG and USAID Regulations essential but can occur after employment.

b. Prior Work Experience

Five years of progressively responsible experience in acquisition, law, management, business, finance or accounting. At least two years of this experience should be with a U.S. Government Agency.

c. Post Entry Training

A full structured training program referred to as Procurement Management Certification Program (PMCP) is mandatory. The PMCP includes, but is not limited to the following courses: 1) Federal and USAID Acquisition Regulations (FAAR), 2) Assistance Management, 3) Cost and Price Analysis, 4) Personal Services Contracts, 5) Competition in Contracting Act (CICA), 6) Simplified Acquisition Procedures (SAP), 7) Federal Contract Law, and 8) Contracts Administration I and II. PMCP also requires "On-the-job-training" in order to attain the required competencies. Upon completion of the basic PMCP coursework, continuing education is required to maintain PMCP certification.

d. Language Proficiency:

List both English and host country language(s) proficiency requirements by level (II, III) and specialization (speaking/reading/writing). Level IV (fluent) in written and spoken English required. Must also be fluent in writing and spoken French.

f. Skills and Abilities:

Excellent analytical skills and the ability to anticipate and evaluate actions/outcomes in work statements, program descriptions and independent government cost estimates. Ability to speak authoritatively before other USAID personnel, as well as to negotiate and represent the US Government's best interests to both US and local individuals, most of whom will hold high level positions within their organizations. Excellent negotiation skills are vital to be able to orchestrate "win-win" situations between disparate parties. Ability to absorb a great deal of data and recall the information (e.g. researching regulatory guidance) is essential in order to interpret and apply the information to real-life situations. Excellent organizational/time management skills to perform work on many actions at the same time, keeping them all moving forward to completion even though each is at a different life-cycle stage. Ability to hold up under pressure and work quickly and efficiently, with an attitude towards customer satisfaction. Must have a strong sense of commitment and integrity in performing the requirements of this position. Ability to analyze CTO evaluation of contractor performance against stated criteria and numerical rating. Excellent English and French-language writing and spoken. Excellent and computer (word processing and spreadsheet applications) skills.

V. INSTRUCTIONS TO APPLICANTS

Applicants must submit a curriculum vitae (CV) which contains information about education, professional experience and skills. CVs must include a discussion of skills in language and computers. Applicants are encouraged to prepare a cover letter which provides more details which show how other skills for this position were demonstrated in previous professional experience. Applicants are also strongly encouraged to submit copies of the application in both French and English.

Applications must include the names and contact information for at least three references. USAID will contact current employers for references. Candidates who do not wish to have current employers contacted must state this in the application.

After an initial review of applications, only those deemed to meet minimum requirements will receive further consideration. After reviewing applications from the initial screening, USAID evaluation committee will develop a short-list of applicants who will be invited for testing and interviews.